UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.5/1995/3
10 April 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
Thirty-fourth session
10-20 April 1995
Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

MONITORING INTERNATIONAL PLANS AND PROGRAMMES OF ACTION

Draft world programme of action for youth to the year 2000 and beyond

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The annex to the present report contains a draft world programme of action for youth to the year 2000 and beyond. It has been prepared by the Secretary-General, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 49/152 of 23 December 1994, on the basis of replies received from Governments, bodies and organizations of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental youth and youth-related organizations. Text in bold type indicates information received since the thirty-third session of the Commission for Social Development, in 1993.

2. The draft is submitted to the Commission for Social Development for consideration by the ad hoc working group on youth that the Commission is expected to establish at its present session.

3. The Commission may recall General Assembly resolution 45/103 of 14 December 1990, in which the Assembly emphasized the need to prepare a global youth programme of action to the year 2000 and beyond. Views and proposals on such a programme were solicited in 1991 from Governments, United Nations bodies and organizations and non-governmental youth and youth-related organizations. In addition, the eighth meeting of the informal inter-agency working group at the technical level on youth (Vienna, 30-31 May 1991) and the Youth Forum of the United Nations system (Vienna, 27-29 May 1991) provided opportunities for the

* E/CN.5/1995/1.

members of the United Nations system concerned and non-governmental youth organizations to contribute suggestions and ideas.

4. By resolution 1991/11 of 30 May 1991, the Economic and Social Council decided that an open-ended ad hoc working group of the Commission for Social Development would be established at the Commission's thirty-third session, in 1993, to review and appraise progress achieved and obstacles identified in implementing the objectives of International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace and to prepare a draft world programme of action for youth to the year 2000 and beyond.

5. A detailed outline of a draft programme of action was submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, in 1991 (A/46/360), in accordance with General Assembly resolution 45/103. In the light of the provisions of Assembly resolution 45/103, a Consultative Meeting of Experts on Youth met at Vienna, from 9 to 13 December 1991 and elaborated a preambular statement of intent and a draft programme of action. The draft programme focused on six of the priority issues identified by the Assembly in resolution 45/103: education, employment, hunger and poverty, health, environment and drug abuse. The comments of Governments, United Nations bodies and organizations, and non-governmental organizations provided input for the revised draft programme of action that the Secretary-General submitted to the Commission at its thirty-third session, in 1993.

6. At that session, the Commission introduced several changes and additions to the draft programme of action. The Commission suggested that two priority issues, originally among those identified by the General Assembly in resolution 45/103, be added: juvenile delinquency and leisure-time activities. In resolution 1993/24, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to continue refining the draft world programme of action for youth to the year 2000 and beyond in accordance with proposals to be submitted by Member States, the United Nations system and concerned intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, particularly in the light of the deliberations of the Commission at its thirty-third session. The Council also requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the United Nations statement of intent on youth: problems and potentials, which could become an integral part of the world programme of action for youth.

7. A revised draft of the programme of action was circulated for comments in 1994, and the Secretary-General submitted a report on the question to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session (A/49/434). In resolution 49/152 of 23 December 1994, the Assembly took note of that report and requested the Commission for Social Development at its thirty-fourth session to consider further the draft world programme of action for youth to the year 2000 and beyond as a matter of priority and to submit it, through the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session. The Assembly also decided to devote up to four plenary meetings at its fiftieth session to mark the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year and to consider the world programme of action for youth to the year 2000 and beyond, with a view to adopting it.

Annex

DRAFT WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR YOUTH TO THE YEAR 2000 AND BEYOND

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PREAMBLE

1. The decade since the observance of International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace has been a period during which the world experienced fundamental political, economic and socio-cultural changes. These changes will inevitably affect at least the first decade of the twenty-first century as well.

2. Young people represent agents, beneficiaries and victims of major societal changes and are generally confronted by a paradox: to seek to be integrated into an existing order or to serve as a force to transform that order. Young people in all parts of the world, living in countries at different stages of development and in different socio-economic settings, aspire to full participation in the life of society. This would include:

(a) Attainment of an educational level commensurate with their aspirations;

(b) Access to employment opportunities equal to their abilities;

(c) Food and nutrition adequate for full participation in the life of society;

(d) A physical and social environment that promotes good health and protection from disease and addiction;

(e) Fundamental freedoms and basic rights without distinction as to race, sex, language, religion;

(f) Participation in decision-making processes, including the right to voluntary membership in representative, democratically elected organizations of young people;

(g) Places and facilities for cultural and sports activities.

3. Governments are urged to consider the following measures as a basis for the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond:

(a) Promoting new opportunities for young people for full and effective participation in the life of society and in decision-making;

(b) Promoting expanded opportunities for young people for productive and gainful employment;

(c) Integrating youth-related concerns in national development policies and plans;

(d) Protecting young people from harmful drugs and the effects of addiction to tobacco and alcohol;

(e) Fostering mutual respect and understanding among young people with different racial and religious backgrounds;

(f) Encouraging increased public access to timely and relevant data on the situation and needs of young people;

(g) Fostering a greater sense of peace and mutual understanding between nations through expanded opportunities for education, action and technical exchanges among young people;

(h) Ensuring an appropriate focus in population activities on young people and the inclusion of young people as agents in promoting population and family life education, information and communication programmes;

(i) Encouraging active engagement in environmental education and action among young people;

(j) Fostering equal access by girls and young women in education and employment and their full participation in the life of society.

I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

4. The World Programme of Action for Youth provides a policy framework and practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation of young people. It contains proposals for action to the year 2000 and beyond aiming at achieving the objectives of the International Youth Year and at fostering conditions and mechanisms to promote improved well-being and livelihood among young people.

5. The Programme of Action focuses in particular on measures to strengthen national capacities in the field of youth and to increase the quality and quantity of opportunities available to young people for full, effective and constructive participation in society.

II. DEVELOPMENT SETTING

6. In 1995, the world youth population - defined by the United Nations as the age cohort 15-24 - is estimated to be 1.03 billion, or 18 per cent of the total world population. The majority of the world youth population (84 per cent in 1995) lives in developing countries. This figure is projected to increase to 89 per cent in 2025. The difficult circumstances that people experience in many developing countries are often even more difficult for young people because of limited opportunities for education and training, viable employment and health and social services, and because of a growing incidence of substance abuse and juvenile delinquency. Many developing countries are also experiencing unprecedented rates of rural-urban migration by young people.

7. Young people in industrialized countries comprise a relatively smaller proportion of the total population because of generally lower birth rates and higher levels of life expectancy. They are a social group that faces particular

problems and uncertainties regarding its future, problems that relate in part to limited opportunities for appropriate employment.

8. Young people in all countries are both a major human resource for development and key agents for social change, economic development and technological innovation. Their imagination, ideals, considerable energies and vision are essential for the continuing development of the societies in which they live. The problems that young people face as well as their vision and aspirations are an essential component of the challenges and prospects of today's societies and future generations as well. Thus, there is special need for new impetus to be given to the design and implementation of youth policies and programmes at all levels. The ways in which the challenges and potentials of young people are addressed by policy will influence current social and economic conditions and the well-being and livelihood of future generations.

III. STRATEGIES AND POLICY SPECIFICS

9. The General Assembly endorsed the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples in 1965. 1/ From 1965 to 1975, both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council emphasized three basic themes in the field of youth: participation, development and peace. The need for an international policy or youth was emphasized as well. In 1979, the General Assembly, by resolution 34/151, designated 1985 as International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace. In 1985, by resolution 40/14, the Assembly endorsed the guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth (A/40/256, annex). The guidelines are significant for their focus on young people as a broad category comprising various subgroups, rather than a single demographic entity. They provide proposals for specific measures to address the needs of such subgroups as young people with disabilities, rural and urban youth, and young women.

10. The World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond is drawn from these general and specific international instruments related to youth policies and programmes. The Programme of Action is significant because it provides a cross-sectoral standard relating to both policy-making and programme design and delivery. It will serve as a model for integrated actions, at all levels, to address more effectively problems experienced by young people in various settings and to enhance their participation in society.

11. The themes identified by the General Assembly for International Youth Year - namely, participation, development and peace - reflect a predominant concern of the international community with distributive justice, popular participation and quality of life. These were reflected in the guidelines, and they represent overall themes of the World Programme of Action for Youth as well.

12. The World Programme of Action for Youth also builds upon other, recent international instruments, including the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, 2/ the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the

World Conference on Human Rights, 3/ the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, 4/ and the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development. 5/

13. The World Programme of Action for Youth is divided into three phases: the first phase focuses on analysis and on drafting the Programme of Action and its adoption by the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, in 1995; the second phase is concerned with world-wide implementation of the Programme of Action to the year 2000; the third phase, covering the period 2001 to 2010, will focus on evaluating progress made and obstacles encountered; it will suggest appropriate adjustments to long-term objectives and specific measures to improve the situation of young people in the societies in which they live.

IV. PRIORITY AREAS

14. Each of the eight priority areas identified by the international community is presented in terms of principal issues, specific objectives and the actions proposed to be taken by various actors to achieve those objectives. Objectives and actions reflect the three themes of International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace; they are interlinked and mutually reinforcing.

15. The eight priority areas identified by the international community are education, employment, hunger and poverty, health, environment, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency and leisure-time activities. The Programme of Action will permit the incorporation of new priorities which may be identified in the future during monitoring and evaluation.

A. Education

16. Although progress towards universal education and literacy has been impressive in recent times, the number of illiterate people will continue to grow and many developing countries are likely to fall short of universal primary education by the year 2000. Three main concerns regarding current systems of education may be expressed. **The first is the inability of many parents in developing countries to send their children to schools because of local economic and social conditions.** The second concerns the paucity of educational opportunities for young women, migrants, refugees, displaced persons, street children, minorities, young people in rural areas and young people with disabilities. The third concerns the relevance of education to employment, and its usefulness for assisting young people in the transition to adulthood and citizenship.

17. To encourage the development of educational training systems more in line with the current needs of young people and the future needs of their societies, it would be helpful to share experience and to investigate alternative arrangements, such as informal and non-formal arrangements for the provision of basic literacy.

Proposals for action

1. Improving the level of basic education, skill training and literacy among youth

18. Priority should be given to the promotion of basic education for all (including literacy), mobilizing for that purpose all channels, agents and forms of education and training, in line with the concept of lifelong education. Priority should also be given to the reform of education content and curricula, at all levels, focusing on scientific literacy, human values and learning of skills, adapted to the changing environment and to life in multi-ethnic societies. The importance of the development of information skills, that is skills for researching, accessing and using information, and informatics should be emphasized. Non-governmental youth organizations and education organizations should develop youth-to-youth programmes for basic education, skill training and literacy. Consideration should be given to developing programmes enabling retired and elderly people to teach literacy and numeric skills to young people. Particular attention should be given to specific groups of youth in distressed circumstances, including migrant and refugee youth, displaced persons, street children and poor youth in urban and rural areas, as well as to special problems, including literacy and numeric problems, for blind youth and youth with other disabilities.

2. Cultural heritage and contemporary patterns of society

19. Governments should establish or strengthen programmes to educate young people in the cultural heritage of their societies. Governments should institute, in cooperation with non-governmental youth organizations, travel and exchange programmes and work camps to help youth understand cultural diversity, develop intercultural learning skills and participate in the preservation of the cultural heritage of their societies. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in cooperation with interested non-governmental organizations, is requested to expand international programmes, such as youth camps, by which young people, particularly from developing countries, with different cultures may help restore major international cultural sites.

3. Promoting mutual understanding and the ideals of peace and tolerance among youth

20. The social fabric of many countries produces generations of youth who have lived with violence and hatred as a way of life. Programmes aimed at learning peacemaking and dispute and conflict resolution should be encouraged and designed by Governments for introduction to schools at all levels. From elementary levels, children and youth should be given opportunities to learn about different cultures and forms of social life other than their own.

4. Vocational and professional training

21. Governments and educational institutions, **in cooperation with regional and international organizations,** should **enhance the relevance of vocational and technical training to both current and prospective employment conditions by applying a broad and flexible approach to human resources development for youth that fosters the capacity of skilled labour to adjust to changes in labour demand.**

5. Training for enterprise programmes

22. Governments, in cooperation with regional and international organizations, should formulate model programmes of training for youth in individual and cooperative enterprises. They should establish self-contained enterprise centres where young people may plan and test their enterprise venture concepts.

6. Infrastructure for training youth workers and youth leaders

23. Governments should assess the adequacy of facilities and programmes to train youth workers and youth leaders, including the adequacy of curricula and staff resources. On the basis of such assessments, Governments should plan and implement relevant training programmes. Non-governmental youth organizations **and networks** should **be encouraged and assisted to** formulate and disseminate model training courses for use by member organizations.

24. Interested organizations should investigate the establishment of an international youth worker and youth **leadership** training institute, with priority given to accepting participants from developing countries. In cooperation with concerned organizations that provide training opportunities for youth, including internships and volunteer programmes, the institute should establish an inventory of system-wide guidelines for such programmes.

25. Organizations should assist young people in developing countries to obtain places at suitable training institutions in developed countries or other parts of the developing world.

B. Employment

26. Unemployment and underemployment among youth is a problem everywhere. **It is, indeed, part of the larger struggle to create employment opportunities for all citizens.** The problem has worsened in recent years because of the global recession, which **has affected** developing countries the most. **More worrying is the fact that when economic growth occurs, there is often no growth in employment.** The difficulty of finding suitable employment is compounded by a host of other problems confronting young people, including illiteracy and insufficient training, and is worsened by periods of economic slow-down **and overall changing economic trends, mostly in developing countries.** In some countries, the influx of young people into the employment market has carried acute problems. According to estimates of the International Labour Organization

(ILO), more than 100 million new jobs would have to be created within the next 20 years in order to provide suitable employment for the growing number of young people in the economically active populations of developing countries. The situation of girls and young women, as well as of young people with disabilities, refugee youth, displaced persons, street children, migrant youth and minorities warrants urgent attention.

27. The crisis of youth employment is also a crisis of opportunities for young people to participate in the life of society. Advances in technology and communications, coupled with improved productivity, have imposed new challenges to youth employment. More and more products are now produced using fewer and fewer workers. Young people are among the most severely affected by this development because it portends a future of declining opportunity for work and reduced prospects for personal fulfilment. If effective solutions are not found, the costs to society will be much higher in the long run. Unemployment creates a host of social ills and young people are particularly susceptible to its damaging effects: the lack of skill development, low self-esteem, marginalization, impoverishment and the wasting of an enormous human resource.

Proposals for action

1. Opportunities for self-employment

28. Governments and organizations should create grant schemes to provide seed money to encourage and support enterprise and employment programmes for young people. Businesses and enterprises should be enlisted to provide counterpart financial and technical support for such schemes. Cooperative schemes involving young people in production and marketing of goods and services should be developed. Formation of youth development banks should be considered. The Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives is encouraged to develop models for cooperatives run by youth in developed and developing countries. Such models would include guidelines for management training and training in entrepreneurial techniques.

2. Employment opportunities for specific groups of the youth population

29. Within funds designated to promote youth employment, Governments should designate fixed percentages for programmes supporting the efforts of young women, young people with disabilities, youth returning from military service, migrant youth, refugee youth, displaced persons and street children. Youth organizations should be directly involved in the planning and implementation of these programmes.

3. Voluntary community services for youth

30. Where they do not yet already exist, Governments should consider the establishment of voluntary service programmes for youth. Such programmes could provide alternatives to military service, or might constitute a required element in educational curricula, depending on national policies and priorities. Work

camps, community service projects, environmental protection and intergenerational cooperation programmes should be included among the opportunities offered. Youth organizations should be directly involved in designing, planning and implementing such voluntary service programmes.

4. Needs created by technological changes

31. Governments, in particular those of developed countries, should ensure that employment opportunities are created for young people in fields that are rapidly evolving as a result of technological innovation. A subset of the employment data compiled by Governments should track the entry of youth into those fields marked by newly emerging technologies.

32. Special attention should be paid to developing and disseminating approaches which promote flexibility in training systems and collaboration between training institutions and employers, especially for young people in high-technology industries.

C. Hunger and poverty

33. Over 1 billion people in the world today live in unacceptable conditions of poverty, mostly in developing countries, particularly in rural areas of low-income countries of Asia and the Pacific, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean and the least developed countries. Poverty has various manifestations, including lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihoods; hunger and malnutrition; ill health; limited or lack of access to education and other basic services; increased morbidity and mortality from illness; homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environments; and social discrimination and exclusion.

34. Hunger remains one of the most serious and intractable threats to humanity. It prevents those who suffer from it, most often youth and children, from taking part in society. Hunger is the result of many factors: mismanagement of distribution; maldistribution of financial resources; unwise exploitation of natural resources; environmental pollution; natural and human-made disasters; conflicts between traditional and contemporary production systems; population growth; and armed conflicts.

Proposals for action

1. Making farming more rewarding and life in agricultural areas more attractive

35. Governments should enhance educational and cultural services and other incentives in rural areas to make them more attractive to young people. Experimental farming programmes directed towards young people should be initiated, and extension services expanded to maintain improvements in agricultural production and marketing.

36. Local and national Governments, in cooperation with youth organizations, should organize cultural events that enhance exchanges between urban and rural youth. Youth organizations should be encouraged and assisted to organize conventions and meetings in rural areas, with special efforts to enlist the cooperation of rural populations, including rural youth.

2. Skill-training for income-generation by young people

37. Governments, in cooperation with youth organizations, should develop training programmes for youth which improve methods of agricultural production and marketing. Training should be based on rural economic needs and the needs of young people in rural areas for the development of production and the achievement of food security. Attention should be given in such programmes to young women, youth returning to rural areas from the cities, young people with disabilities, refugee and migrant youth, displaced persons and street children and youth returning from military service.

3. Land grants for young people with special needs

38. Governments should provide grants of land to youth and youth organizations, supported by financial and technical assistance and training. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and ILO are requested to document and disseminate information about national experience with land-grant and settlement schemes for use by Governments.

4. Cooperation between urban and rural youth in food production and distribution

39. Non-governmental organizations should organize direct-marketing groups, including production and distribution cooperatives, to improve current marketing systems and to ensure that young farmers have access to them. The aim of such groups should be to reduce food shortages and losses from defective systems of food transport to markets.

D. Health

40. Young people in some parts of the world suffer from poor health as a result of societal conditions, as well as their own actions. Poor health is often caused by lack of information and lack of health services for youth, mostly in developing countries. The resulting problems are, among others, sexually transmitted diseases, including infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV); early pregnancies; lack of hygiene and sanitation, leading to infection, infestation and diarrhoea; genetic and congenital diseases; psychological and mental diseases; narcotic and psychotropic drug abuse; misuse of alcohol and tobacco; unwarranted risk-taking and destructive activity, resulting in unintentional injuries; malnutrition; and poor spacing of births.

Proposals for action

1. Development of health education

41. Governments should include, in the curricula of educational institutions at the primary and secondary levels, programmes focusing on primary health knowledge and practices. Particular emphasis should be placed on the understanding of basic hygiene requirements and the need to develop and sustain a healthy environment. These programmes need to be developed in full awareness of the needs and priorities of young people and with their involvement.

42. Cooperation among Governments and educational and health institutions should be encouraged in order to promote personal responsibility for a healthy lifestyle and provide the knowledge and skills necessary to adopt a healthy lifestyle, including teaching the legal, social and health consequences of behaviour that poses health risks.

2. Promotion of reproductive health for young people and development of appropriate reproductive health education programmes

43. Governments should develop, with educational institutions, curricula to provide appropriate reproductive health education at all levels of the educational system, particularly with a view to preventing HIV infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). National and local governments, in cooperation with non-governmental youth organizations, should develop opportunities for peer counselling and similar youth-to-youth programmes, as well as governmental programmes to instil a positive attitude among young people regarding gender equity and sexual health and to combat sexual stereotypes. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other interested United Nations organizations are encouraged to continue their efforts to ensure that boys and young men are taught to respect the other sex, and girls and young women should be given every opportunity to develop self-esteem.

44. Governments should develop complete reproductive health service programmes for young people, designed to inform them of the requirements for healthy family formation and to provide counselling services for youth in distressed circumstances. UNFPA and other interested United Nations organizations are to be encouraged to continue assigning high priority to promoting adolescent reproductive health.

3. HIV infection and AIDS among young people

45. Governments and youth organizations should develop specific programmes of information and education for young people so that they can take proper precautions against HIV infection and the development of AIDS.

4. Promotion of good sanitation and hygiene practices

46. Governments, in cooperation with youth organizations, should promote the establishment of national youth health associations to promote good sanitation and hygiene.

5. Prevention of disease and illness among youth resulting from poor health practices

47. Governments, in cooperation with youth organizations, should investigate the possibility of adopting policies for discouraging tobacco and alcohol use among young people, including the banning of advertisements of tobacco and alcohol products.

48. Programmes should be instituted, with the assistance of the United Nations bodies and organizations concerned, to train medical and paramedical personnel in health issues of particular concern to young people, including healthy lifestyles. Research into such issues should be promoted, particularly research into the effects and treatment of drug abuse and addiction. Youth organizations should be enlisted in these efforts.

6. Eliminating sexual abuse among young people

49. As recommended by the International Conference on Population and Development, countries should take effective steps to address the neglect, as well as all types of exploitation and abuse, of children, adolescents and youth, such as abduction, rape and incest, pornography, trafficking, abandonment and prostitution. 6/ Governments are urged to prohibit female genital mutilation wherever it exists and to give vigorous support to efforts among non-governmental and community organizations, and religious institutions to eliminate such practices. 7/

7. Reduction of youth involvement in violence as victims and perpetrators

50. Governments should develop appropriate violence prevention and early intervention programmes. It is more important to prevent crime than to react to crime. Measures to support equality and justice, while reducing poverty and hopelessness, are preferable to measures that rely on the criminal justice system.

51. It is imperative to foster the development of social organization, particularly youth organizations, within a supportive social policy and legislative framework, through community involvement. Government assistance should focus on facilitating the abilities of community and youth organizations to express and evaluate their needs concerning the prevention of violence and crime, and to formulate and implement actions for themselves. This can best be achieved through partnerships, with community organizations encouraged to

provide necessary crime and violence avoidance services within a framework that includes adequate standards, training, evaluation and accountability.

8. Combating malnutrition among young people

52. Governments should promote out-of-school and post-primary-school health projects by individuals and youth organizations, emphasizing information on healthy eating practices. School lunch programmes, programmes which offer food for work, provision of food supplements and similar services should be available whenever possible to help ensure proper diets for young people.

E. Environment

53. The deterioration of the natural environment is one of the principal concerns of young people worldwide as it has direct implications for their well-being today and in the future. The natural environment must be maintained and preserved for both present and future generations. The causes of environmental degradation must be dealt with. The environmentally friendly use of natural resources and environmentally sustainable economic growth will improve human life. Sustainable development has become a key element in the programmes of youth organizations throughout the world. While every segment of society is responsible for maintaining the environmental integrity of the community, youth have a special interest in maintaining a healthy environment because they will be the ones to inherit it. They should be involved in designing and implementing appropriate environmental policies.

Proposals for action

1. Integrating environmental training into education and training programmes

54. Greater emphasis should be given in school curricula to environmental education. Training programmes should be provided to inform teachers of the environmental aspects of their subject-matter and to enable them to educate youth on environmentally friendly habits.

55. The participation of youth groups in gathering environmental data and in understanding actual environmental action should be encouraged as a means of improving both their knowledge of the environment and their personal concern in caring for the environment.

2. Improving exchanges of information on environmental issues between developed and developing countries

56. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in cooperation with non-governmental youth organizations, is requested to intensify production of information materials illustrating the connection between environmental degradation in developing and developed countries and describing the outcome of

initiatives undertaken in those countries. **UNEP is requested to strengthen its efforts to disseminate and exchange information with and among youth organizations.** Governments **should encourage and assist** youth organizations to initiate and develop youth-to-youth contacts through town-twinning and similar programmes in order to share the experience gained in different countries.

3. Strengthening participation of youth in the protection, preservation and improvement of the environment

57. Governments and youth organizations should initiate action programmes to reduce waste and encourage recycling **and other sound environmental practices.** The participation of young people and their organizations in such programmes can provide good training and encourage awareness and action. **Waste management** programmes may represent potential income-generating activities that provide opportunities for employment.

F. Drug abuse

58. The vulnerability of young people to drug abuse has in recent years become a major concern. The consequences of widespread drug abuse and trafficking, particularly for young men and women, are all too apparent.

59. As the number of psychotropic drugs increases steadily and their effects and appropriate prescriptive practices are often not fully known, some patients may not be adequately treated and others may become over-medicated. Self-medication with tranquilizers, sleeping-pills and stimulants can also create serious problems, particularly in countries and regions where distribution controls are weak and habit-forming drugs are purchased abroad or diverted from licit channels of distribution.

60. The international community places particular emphasis on demand reduction and prevention of the first use of drugs in realistic awareness of the difficulty of achieving effective treatment for abusers and drug-dependent persons and of the discouragingly high levels of post-treatment relapse into drug abuse. Identification of comprehensive programmes adapted to the social and cultural context is a difficult task, which is further complicated by controversies over the effectiveness of various approaches to treatment.

Proposals for action

1. Participation of youth organizations and youth in demand reduction programmes for young people

61. Drug control strategies at the national and international levels consistently emphasize initiatives aimed at reducing drug abuse among young people. This is reflected in the resolutions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and in the demand reduction programmes of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP). To be effective, demand reduction programmes should be targeted at specific groups of young people considered at risk and the content of the programmes should respond directly to the interests and concerns

of those people. Increasing opportunities for gainful employment and activities for social participation are important measures to prevent drug addiction among youth. Youth organizations can play a key role in designing and implementing programmes to encourage the integration of youth into the community and to develop healthy lifestyles, which are the best protection against drug abuse. Programmes could include participation in group activities, such as team sports, hiking and camping, as well as community service and mentoring. Civic organizations could make a contribution by providing equipment and helping to construct playing fields and sports arenas, as well as by helping to transmit organizational skills to young people. The programme should include training of youth leaders in communication and counselling skills and person-to-person communication.

62. Governments should enhance the scope of drug control agencies established under the provisions of existing United Nations conventions to monitor the distribution of addictive drugs. In accordance with international treaties, government entities and non-governmental organizations should cooperate in carrying out demand reduction programmes for illicit drugs, tobacco and alcohol.

2. Training medical and paramedical students in the rational use of pharmaceuticals containing narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances

63. As training in this range of professions and skills is normally transmitted to men and women in their early twenties or younger, medical curricula could usefully be enlarged to include elements on the effects of habit-forming drugs and appropriate prescriptive techniques. Similarly, job-training programmes for hospital staff and pharmaceutical supply houses should include control techniques designed to avoid leakage or deliberate diversion of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances into illicit channels.

64. UNDCP and the World Health Organization (WHO) have begun to develop initiatives along those lines, and courses are now also being given at several universities in different countries. WHO, associations of the medical and paramedical professions, pharmaceutical corporations and medical faculties could be asked to formulate model training courses for inclusion in training curricula, and these model courses could be translated and widely disseminated to assist universities and training institutions in ensuring that young students are adequately prepared for their responsibilities.

3. Treatment and rehabilitation of young people who are drug abusers or drug-dependent and young alcoholics and tobacco users

65. Research has been undertaken into the possibility of identifying medication to block cravings for specific drugs without creating secondary dependency, but much remains to be done in this area. The need for such medical advances has become more urgent with the world-wide increase in abuse and addiction, as the growing prevalence of AIDS places added burdens on treatment facilities and

compounds the problems of addiction by infection transmitted through contaminated needles.

66. Graduate students in faculties of medicine and chemistry, or in the social services and public administration, could be encouraged to focus their research on such complex issues as medical treatment of drug-dependent persons and abusers, administration of the public health components of drug treatment and rehabilitation, surveys of the effectiveness of different types and combinations of treatment and comparable rates of recidivism.

67. Of particular interest is the development of treatment techniques involving the family setting and peer groups. Young people can make significant contributions by participating in peer group therapy to facilitate the acceptance of young drug-dependent persons and abusers upon their re-entry into the community. Direct participation in rehabilitation therapy entails close cooperation between youth groups and other community and health services. WHO and other world-wide medical and mental health organizations could set guidelines for continuing research and for carrying out comparable programmes in different settings, whose effectiveness could be evaluated over a given period of time.

4. Care for young drug abusers and drug-dependent suspects and offenders in the criminal justice and prison system

68. Authorities may consider possible strategies to limit exposure to drug abuse and dependence among young people suspected or convicted of criminal offences. Such strategies could include alternative measures, such as daily reporting to police stations or requirements for regular visits to parole officers, and fulfilment of a specified number of hours of community service.

69. Prison authorities should cooperate closely with law enforcement agencies to keep drugs out of the prison system. Prison personnel should be discouraged from tolerating the presence of drugs in penal institutions.

70. Young prisoners who are already drug-dependent should be segregated as far as practicable and targeted as priority candidates for treatment and rehabilitation services. Guidelines and standard minimum rules should be prepared to assist national authorities in law enforcement and prison systems in maintaining the necessary controls and initiating treatment and rehabilitation services. Action along these lines constitutes a long-term advantage to society, as the cycle of dependence, release, repeated offences and repeated incarcerations constitutes a heavy burden on the criminal justice system, quite apart from the wasted lives and personal tragedies which result from drug dependence and criminal behaviour.

G. Juvenile delinquency

71. Juvenile crime and delinquency are serious problems all over the world. Their intensity and gravity depend mostly on the social, economic and cultural settings of each country. There is evidence, however, of an apparent world-wide

increase in juvenile criminality combined with economic recession, especially in marginal sectors of urban centres. In many cases, youth offenders are "street children" who have been exposed to violence in their immediate social environment, either as observers or as victims. Their basic education, when they have it, is poor; their primary socialization from the family is too often inadequate; and their socio-economic environment is shaped by poverty and destitution.

Proposals for action

1. Priority to preventive measures

72. Governments should give priority to issues and problems of juvenile delinquency and youth criminality, with particular attention to preventive policies and programmes. Rural areas should be provided with adequate socio-economic and administrative opportunities and services that could discourage young people from migrating to urban areas. Youth from poor urban settings should have available specific educational, employment and leisure programmes, particularly during long school holidays. Young people who drop out of school or come from broken families should benefit from specific social programmes that help them build self-esteem and confidence conducive to responsible adulthood.

2. Rehabilitation services and programmes

73. Destitution, poor living conditions, inadequate education, malnutrition, illiteracy, unemployment and lack of leisure-time activities are factors of marginalization of young people, which makes them vulnerable to exploitation as well as to involvement in criminal and other deviant behaviour. If preventive measures address the very causes of criminality, rehabilitation programmes and services should be made available to those who already have a criminal history. Mostly, youth delinquency begins with petty offences such as robbery or violent behaviour, that can be easily traced and corrected through institutions and community and family environments. Indeed law enforcement should be a part of rehabilitation measures. Finally, the human rights of young people who are imprisoned should be protected and principles of penal majority according to penal laws should be given great attention.

H. Leisure-time activities

74. The importance of leisure-time activities in the psychological, cognitive and physical development of young people is recognized in any society. Leisure-time activities include games, sports, cultural events and entertainment. In addition to their primary functions, leisure-time activities are considered factors that keep young people from being idle, especially during their spare time. Appropriate leisure programmes for youth are elements of any measure aimed at fighting social ills, such as drug abuse, juvenile delinquency and other deviant behaviour. While leisure programmes can contribute greatly to the development of the physical, intellectual and emotional potential of young people, they should be designed with due care and concern so that they are not

used as a means for excluding youth from participating in other aspects of social life or for indoctrinating them. Leisure-time activity programmes should be made freely available to young people.

Proposals for action

1. Leisure-time activities as an integral part of youth policies and programmes

75. In planning, designing and implementing youth policies and programmes, Governments should give priority to leisure-time activities, with the active involvement of youth movements and organizations. The importance given to such activities should be reflected in budgetary provisions.

2. Leisure-time activities as elements of educational programmes

76. A means by which Governments may accord priority to leisure-time activities is to provide educational institutions with resources to develop the infrastructure required for their establishment. In addition, leisure-time activities could be part of the regular school curriculum.

3. Leisure-time activities in urban planning and rural development

77. National Governments as well as local authorities and community development agencies should incorporate leisure-time activity programmes and facilities in urban planning, giving particular attention to areas with a high human concentration. Equally, rural development programmes should pay due attention to the leisure needs of rural youth.

V. MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

78. Effective implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth will require significant expressions of commitment from the institutions responsible for its adoption and implementation and the active involvement of such organizations and especially of youth from all sectors of society. Without such commitment by governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental entities at the national, regional and international levels, the Programme of Action will remain little more than a global statement of intent and general standard for action.

79. Therefore the development of an overall system of enabling mechanisms is necessary for the Programme of Action to be implemented. Such mechanisms should engage, on a continuing basis, the human, political, economic and socio-cultural resources necessary to ensure that the Programme of Action is implemented efficiently and effectively.

A. National level

80. Implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth is ultimately the responsibility of Governments in cooperation, as appropriate, with the non-governmental and private sectors. Translation of the Programme's proposals for action into specific plans, targets and law will be influenced by national priorities, resources and historical experience. In this process, Governments can be assisted, at their request, by regional and international organizations.

81. Governments that have not already done so are urged to formulate and adopt an integrated national youth policy as a means of addressing youth-related concerns. This should be done as part of a continuing process of review and assessment of the situation of youth, formulation of a cross-sectoral national youth programme of action in terms of specific, time-limited objectives, and systematic evaluation of progress achieved and obstacles encountered.

82. Reinforcing youth-related concerns in development activities can be facilitated through the existence of multilevel mechanisms for consultation, dissemination of information, coordination, monitoring and evaluation. These should be cross-sectoral and include participation of youth-related departments and ministries, national non-governmental youth organizations and the private sector.

83. Special and additional efforts may be required to develop and disseminate model frameworks for integrated policies and to identify and organize an appropriate division of responsibilities among both governmental and non-governmental entities concerned with youth-related issues. Special and additional efforts could also be directed towards strengthening national capacities for data collection and dissemination of information, research and policy studies, planning and coordination and training and advisory services.

84. National coordinating mechanisms should be appropriately strengthened for integrated youth policies and programmes. Where such mechanisms do not exist, Governments are urged to promote their establishment on a multilevel and cross-sectoral basis.

B. Regional cooperation

85. The activities of the United Nations regional commissions, in cooperation with concerned regional intergovernmental and non-governmental youth and youth-related organizations, are essential complements to national and global action aimed at building national capacities.

86. Regional commissions are urged to promote the implementation of the Programme of Action in accordance with their own plans and programme budgets, undertake comprehensive reviews of the progress achieved and obstacles encountered and identify options to further regional-level action.

87. Regional intergovernmental meetings of ministers responsible for youth, in cooperation with the concerned United Nations regional commission and regional youth non-governmental organizations, can make particular contributions to the

formulation, implementation and evaluation of action at the regional level, including periodic monitoring of regional youth programmes.

88. Data collection, dissemination of information, research and policy studies, interorganizational coordination and technical cooperation, training and advisory services are among the measures which can be provided on request at the regional level to promote, implement and evaluate youth programmes.

89. Regional youth non-governmental organizations and regional offices of bodies and organizations of the United Nations system concerned with youth are urged to consider meeting on a biennial basis to review and discuss issues and trends and identify proposals for regional and subregional cooperation. United Nations regional commissions can play an essential role through the provision of a suitable venue and appropriate input regarding regional action.

C. International cooperation

90. An essential role for international cooperation is to promote conditions conducive to the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth at all levels. Means available include policy-level debates at the policy level and decisions at the intergovernmental level, global monitoring of issues and trends, data collection and dissemination of information, research and studies, planning and coordination, technical cooperation, and outreach and partnership among interested constituencies from both the non-governmental and private sectors.

91. In its capacity as the subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council responsible for global social development issues, the Commission for Social Development has a major role to play as the focal point for the implementation of the Programme of Action. So that this key role can be performed efficiently and effectively it is important that the Commission obtain a clear mandate for continuing the policy-level dialogue on youth, for policy coordination and for periodic monitoring of issues and trends.

92. The current regional and interregional conferences of ministers responsible for youth affairs in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and Western Asia are urged to consider convening a standing conference of ministers responsible for youth affairs meeting at four-year intervals under the aegis of the United Nations and in conjunction with meetings of the Commission for Social Development. The standing conference could provide an effective forum for focused dialogue on youth-related issues to ensure effective promotion and monitoring of the Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels.

93. Youth-related bodies and organizations of the United Nations system are invited to support the work of the above-mentioned standing conference of ministers responsible for youth. In this connection, the existing ad hoc inter-agency group on youth should meet annually and invite all the bodies and agencies of the United Nations system concerned and related intergovernmental organizations to discuss ways and means by which they can promote and further

implement the Programme of Action on a coordinated basis and contribute to effective planning and follow-up of the standing conference of ministers.

94. Effective channels of communication between non-governmental youth organizations and the United Nations system are essential for dialogue and consultations on the situation of youth and implications for the implementation of the Programme of Action. The General Assembly has repeatedly stressed the importance of channels of communication in the field of youth. The Youth Forum of the United Nations system could contribute to Programme implementation through the identification and promotion of joint initiatives to further Programme objectives so that they better reflect the interests of youth.

1. Data collection and dissemination of information

95. Capacities to collect, analyse and present data in a timely and accurate fashion are essential for effective planning and target-setting, for monitoring issues and trends and for evaluating progress achieved in implementing the world youth programme of action. Special attention should be directed towards building national capacities and institutions to collect and compile regularly socio-economic data series that are both cross-sectional and disaggregated by cohort. To this end, interested centres and institutions may wish to consider the possibility of jointly strengthening or establishing, in cooperation with the United Nations, networks concerned with collection of data and publication of statistics and to realize thereby greater economies of scale in the development and dissemination of statistics in the field of youth.

96. Major contributions are currently being made by the United Nations related to data and statistics in the field of youth. Such contributions include the socio-economic data collection and statistical development activities of the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat; the youth policies and programmes information activities of the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development; the educational and literacy data collection activities of UNESCO; and the youth advisory networks of the United Nations Environment Programme. Concerned bodies and agencies of the United Nations system are urged to explore ways and means of achieving greater coherence in data collection and the publication of statistics. This could include programme planning and coordination on an inter-agency basis. For example, the data bank programme on adolescent health of the World Health Organization is coordinated with the work of the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat. Other bodies and agencies of the United Nations system are invited to contribute data in their respective areas of expertise to an integrated socio-economic data bank on youth. For instance, the international drug abuse assessment system of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme is urged to consider including a component on youth and drugs. An inventory of innovative youth policies, programmes and projects could be coordinated and made available to interested users by the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development. Other topics that could be considered for joint action include juvenile delinquency, runaways and homeless youth.

97. Public information and communications are equally important in building awareness of youth issues, as well as a consensus on appropriate planning and action. The bodies and organizations of the United Nations system concerned are urged, as a matter of priority, to review publications currently produced and identify ways in which these publications can better promote the Programme of Action and areas in which they need to be complemented through the production of leaflets and posters in connection with special events.

98. To encourage widespread awareness and support for the Programme of Action, Governments, non-governmental organizations and, as appropriate, the private sector, are urged to consider the possibility of preparing both printed and audiovisual materials related to areas of concern in the Programme of Action. This could be carried out with the assistance of and in cooperation with the United Nations and materials could be disseminated through United Nations public information channels. In addition young people and youth organizations are urged to identify and plan information activities that focus on priority issues, which they would undertake within the context of the Programme of Action.

2. Research and policy studies

99. Comparative studies on issues and trends concerning youth are essential to the continuous expansion and development of the global body of knowledge on relevant theory, concepts and methods. International, regional and national research centres and institutions concerned with youth-related issues are urged to consider the possibility of establishing cooperative relationships with the United Nations to ensure effective links between the implementation of the Programme of Action and relevant research and studies.

100. A closely related concern is cooperation in strengthening and improving national capacities for the research design, conduct and dissemination of relevant studies on the situation of young people.

101. A third concern is improved planning and coordination of the scarce human and financial resources available so that appropriate attention is accorded to initiatives at all levels, undertaken by young people, related to priority areas identified in the Programme of Action, to the identification and assessment of issues and trends, and to the review and evaluation of policy initiatives.

3. Planning and coordination

102. Building upon the mechanisms currently available within the United Nations system for planning, programming and coordinating activities concerning youth, interested bodies and organizations of the United Nations system are urged to review their medium-term planning process to give appropriate consideration to reinforcing a youth perspective in their activities. They are also urged to identify current and projected programme activities that correspond to the priorities of the Programme of Action so that these activities can be reinforced throughout the system. Appropriate attention should be directed towards identifying opportunities for joint planning among interested members of the system so that joint action may be undertaken that reflects their respective

areas of competence and that is of direct interest to young people or that responds to priority needs of young people in special circumstances.

103. A complementary mechanism for coordination is provided by the channels that have been developed between the United Nations and intergovernmental and non-governmental youth organizations. Such mechanisms require appropriate strengthening to enable them to respond better to priorities for action, as identified in the Programme of Action.

4. Technical cooperation, training and advisory services

104. Technical cooperation is an essential means for building national capacities and institutional capabilities. Bodies and organizations of the United Nations system that have not already done so are urged to review and assess their range of programmatic and operational activities in the light of priorities for action identified in the Programme of Action and to reinforce a youth dimension in technical cooperation activities. In this regard, special attention should be directed towards measures that will serve to promote expanded opportunities for technical exchanges in the field of youth as a means of building expanded and strengthened networks of institutions and organizations.

105. There is a need for greater streamlining in technical cooperation policies and procedures, particularly for training and advisory services, so that they do not place undue administrative burdens on national officials. With national execution as the principal mode for technical cooperation, offices responsible for national youth policies and programmes should be in a position to plan and execute technical cooperation activities available from all sources in accordance with a basic format, with annexes as required by the donor organization concerned. The aim should be to reduce administrative overheads, as these proportionately reduce the resources available for technical cooperation.

106. The organization on an inter-agency basis of missions to review, assess and plan technical cooperation concerning youth, available on request to Governments, represents a specific contribution by the United Nations system to the implementation of the Programme of Action.

107. The United Nations Youth Fund represents a unique resource to support catalytic and innovative action concerning youth. Programme implementation can be furthered through the Fund's support in both a technical and a financial sense of pilot action, studies and technical exchanges on non-conventional issues concerning youth whose short time-frames often make it difficult to obtain needed support from conventional budgeting processes. The capacities of the Fund for innovative action are, however, limited in the light of Programme priorities, and interested Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector are urged to consider the possibility of supporting the activities of the Fund on a predictable and sustained basis. To this end, the parties concerned may wish to consider the possibility of constituting an interim advisory body at an appropriate level to review the application of the

terms of reference of the Fund, priorities and means of strengthening its capacities.

5. Outreach and partnership among specialized constituencies

108. A crucial element in implementing the Programme of Action is recognition that governmental action alone is not sufficient to ensure its success. This will require both systematic outreach and partnership among the Programme's many constituencies in both the non-governmental and private sectors.

109. A critical first step is phased expansion and regularization of channels of communication between the United Nations and non-governmental youth organizations to include representatives of interested private sector organizations. This would build upon the provisions of the General Assembly in resolution 45/103 concerning the involvement of youth and non-governmental youth organizations in formulation of the Programme of Action. Youth, youth-related organizations and interested private sector organizations are urged to identify, in partnership with Governments, ways in which they could contribute to action at the local level to implement the Programme, and to the periodic review, appraisal and formulation of options to achieve its goals and objectives.

110. Implementation of the Programme of Action offers important opportunities to expand technical and cultural exchanges among young people through new partnerships in both the public and private sectors; to identify and test improved ways to leverage public resources, in partnership with the non-governmental and private sectors, to further Programme priorities; and to encourage and plan jointly innovative approaches to critical issues, such as violence against young women, promoting new and viable educational and employment opportunities, sexuality and health, including the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

111. Issue-specific voluntary organizations, particularly those concerned with education, employment, health, hunger, ecology and the environment and drug abuse, can further Programme implementation by encouraging involvement of young people in their programme planning and field activities. The Programme of Action can contribute to the work of such organizations because it provides a global policy framework for consultation and coordination.

Notes

1/ General Assembly resolution 2037 (XX).

2/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

3/ Report of the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14-25 June 1993 (A/CONF.157/24 (Part I)), chap. III.

4/ Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994 (A/CONF.171/13 and Add.1), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

5/ Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995 (A/CONF.166/9), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

6/ Report of the International Conference on Population and Development ..., chap. I, resolution 1, annex, para. 6.9.

7/ Ibid., para. 4.22.